

Russian petroleum giant Rosneft, which, like all major players in the global oil industry, is seeking ways to compensate for losses prompted by the drastic drop in crude prices over the past year and a half or so, is currently engaged in talks with ELPE in search of possible deals that could prove mutually beneficial.

For the time being, Rosneft is on the lookout for commercial deals in various regions, including Greece, but these could develop into strategic partnerships, certain sources believe.

According to sources, ELPE officials were in Moscow about a fortnight ago to hold talks with leading officials at Rosneft, Russia's biggest petroleum industry. Its production fell by an estimated 0.7 to one percent last year as a result of the crude price collapse.

The talks included proposals for Rosneft and ELPE to purchase various petroleum products from each other, based on their respective surplus and deficit amounts for products, the sources said.

The meeting was the first between the two sides. Follow-up talks are expected in the immediate future, the sources added, while noting that an agreement, should it be reached soon, could be announced by Russian President Vladimir Putin during his upcoming official to Athens, scheduled for May 28.

At present, the Russian State holds a 62 percent stake of Rosneft, but a 19.5 percent share is up for sale as part of a new round of privatizations launched by Moscow.

Despite the difficulties encountered as a result of the crude price drop, Rosneft remains a powerful corporation. Last year, it reported an improved EBITDA figure, up 17.8 percent, and a net profit increase of two percent.

A substantial cost-cutting initiative implemented by Rosneft helped bring about these figures. The company held back on new drilling projects and is also looking for profitable ventures in other regions, including Greece.

Rosneft had first expressed an interest in ELPE back in 2013, through Valentina Matviyenko, officer of the Upper House of Russia's parliament, the country's third-highest position.

source: energyexpress.eu